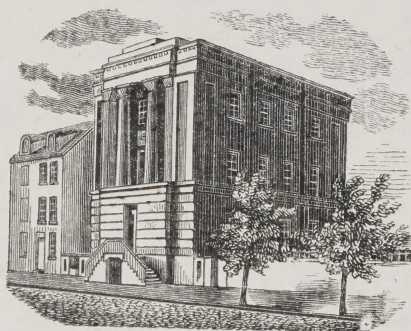


AN ESSAY ON  
*Phthisis Pulmonalis,*

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE



HOMŒOPATHIC MEDICAL COLLEGE

OF PENNSYLVANIA,

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*By John S. Sturgis  
Of Lexington Fayette County Kentucky.*

(11)  
*Phthisis Pulmonalis*—

This disease is peculiar to no age, no race, no rank, and no climate. It knocks at the door of all, though not with equal step. Mother and maid, the sweet babe, the youth in life's green spring, manhood's prime, and hoary age; all meet and fall before this fell disease. Saxon and Celt, Indian and African, Cottage and Palace; all know but too well its features, and shrink as from the face of death. The frozen North and the sunny South are no strangers to its visits, but its chosen home is in our Temperate zone; its choicest victims are our loveliest and our best; it leaves a shining mark. The course of Phthisis is usually marked by three stages; the first second gliding almost insensibly into the last. The symptoms of the first stage vary. Generally there is a slight, dry, hacking cough, followed after a time by

expectoration of mucus, and then of yellowish opaque matter. The appetite is good and the strength little, if any, diminished. But the patient gets tired easily, and sometimes breathes with difficulty. In the second stage, decided symptoms are established; the countenance is characteristic, the eyes are generally painfully brilliant, sometimes dull & heavy - the patient can lie on one side better than the other, and sometimes only on the back. Emaciation commences - the pulse is increased to 120 & 140 per minute. He thinks it strange that he does not get rid of his cold, but he has no fear until a hemorrhage occurs. But this yields to medical treatment, his cough is less violent, and he thinks he is getting better. After a time the cough becomes worse, breaking the rest at night, in violent paroxysms. Breathing is more difficult, the pulse is quick, the face is flushed, the tongue is



furrowed, there is little appetite, there is night  
sweat, and the third stage is approaching.

In this, the symptoms of the first and second  
are aggravated. Besides them, the matter thrown  
out is purulent, mixed with softened tubercles  
in the shape of yellowish substance. The cough  
is much more in the morning, on account  
of the accumulation of the night. The face  
is now hectic. Chills occasionally come on,  
and cease, and come again, without any  
assignable cause. The night sweats are  
profuse and debilitating. Blood is occasionally  
discharged from the lungs, but less than at  
first. The purulent expectorations are very  
copious. As the disease advances the stomach  
and bowels become involved. Diarrhea exhausts  
the patient. The voice is inaudible and  
breathing is very difficult. The chest becomes  
flat, the cheeks are hollow, the eyes are sunken,  
the shoulders round, the clavicles prominent.

The mind is clear and hopeful. The feet become cold & swell—and at last sometimes a slight delirium occurs. The patient is too weak to expectorate, there is now no cough, the pus accumulates, and breathing ceases. These symptoms vary, and the most usual course of the disease only has been traced. This course is often arrested by pregnancy, and encephalitis is significant of cases where the disease has been held in abeyance for years during childbearing, to return with terrible increase after the turn of life, hurrying its victims to the grave in a few months. The duration of Phthisis varies greatly; it has run its course in less than a month, and it has lingered for near half a century. Most cases end in the second year. "Consumption" in the language of an able writer. "May be traced back to the earliest periods of Medical history. Hippocrates, commonly styled the father of

Medicine, than it, and has well described its  
melancholic course, and things ages have  
rolled on with all these changes, this Lane  
of human life, still remains the same, has  
never abated in its fatality—never rested  
in its work of destruction. Various opin-  
ions prevail even at the present day, as regards  
the real nature of tubercles. The works of  
Laennec, Bayle, Louis and others have render-  
ed our knowledge of the morbid anatomy of  
tubercles more complete, than that of any  
other morbid product. But our limited space  
forbids us entering into this branch of our sub-  
ject. Suffice it for the present to say that tuber-  
culous matter, or tubercles, are in existence  
firm but brittle, of a yellow or greyish color,  
and unctuous to the feel, insoluble in water,  
softening when placed in it, without smell, ho-  
mogeneous & unorganized. Tubercles vary in  
size from that of a granule to the diameter of



half an inch. They are not confined to the  
lungs, but are found in the heart, liver, stomach,  
intestines, brain &c.

In speaking of the predisposing causes of  
Phthisis, inheritance comes first in influence.  
It is often inherited from one parent, almost  
invariably from both. We often see whole fam-  
ilies cut down one by one as they reach  
maturity. Even when one generation escapes,  
it is apt to appear in the next. Cold is  
perhaps next in influence. On this account  
phthisis is more prevalent in cold than  
in warm climates. Negroes are more  
sensitive to cold, than whites, and are more  
subject to this disease in cold climates.  
Whatever tends to produce continued debility  
may generate a Consumptive diathesis -  
Scrophula, common colds, abuse of marching,  
neglect of early symptoms, diminution of the  
capacity of the chest, from a habit of stooping

(11)  
and from tight lacing, indolence and dependence;  
-cy; grief, anxiety, intense mental application,  
want of exercise, doing much business, sitting  
and sleeping in over heated and ill ventilated  
apartments, sleeping on feather beds, and  
frequenting crowded assemblies, living in  
cellars, and dark gloomy apartments, where  
the sun seldom enters, have all been fore-  
-runners of this disease. It occurred post haec,  
and probably propter haec. All of these causes  
result in debility, delicacy, effeminacy, and  
aversion to all occupation, a state of body  
and mind which is soon to be followed by  
Consumption. So long as children are brought  
up on feather beds, and fed on sweet meats  
and delicacies and drugged with hot tea &  
Coffee, and indulged in exemption from  
all industrious and laborious pursuits, so  
long will they continue to fade like hot-  
house plants. These mistaken notions, are



about peculiar to this country. While our  
ladies and children, are all night constantly  
in the house, growing delicate and effeminate,  
the ladies and children of Europe are out  
labouring or walking in the open air -  
It is a mistaken notion among American  
ladies that delicacy is beauty - this is not  
beauty - health is beauty. But perhaps the  
greatest of all causes of acquired Consumption,  
is the result of long continued Masturbation.  
The delicacy of this subject, no doubt often  
prevents physicians from speaking of it to  
parents and their children; but this  
secret vice is spreading a full over our  
land, and it is the duty of every physician  
to lend a helping <sup>hand</sup> to parents, to arrest its  
baneful influence.

Of exciting causes, we may mention cold,  
producing by producing Catarrh, pneumonia  
and pleurisy. Acid gases and vapors

when inhaled, irritating powder, violent ex-  
tension of the lungs, may all be classed under  
this head. Women are more subject to  
this disease than men. Their organization  
is more delicate, Their habits are more sed-  
entary. They wear thinner shoes, they lace  
tighter. They have to be up at night in the  
cold with children. All these causes tend  
to multiply cases of this disease among  
them. Perhaps they are killed than men, and  
when the Gods love die young. We lay  
no great stress however on this last cir-  
cumstance.

Occupation undoubtedly has something to do  
with Consumption. Weavers, tailors, milliners,  
seamstresses, teachers, nurses, monks, and  
fair birds are peculiarly liable to it. While  
farmers and out-door mechanics are sel-  
dom attacked by it. Of all diseases this is

the power of Quack. While he sees  
not the subject's life but expediency to gain them  
your scepter for their expenditure. But in this  
many things sometimes begin, then full and  
gentle play. Absolute ignorance and glazing  
hopes unite to full the vision, and from the  
cloud to break in golden drops our husband.  
The humane enlightened physician is bound  
to discover, is put under for the Charlatan,  
who promises a speedy remedy, a remedy that  
has already cured thousands, is destined to  
cure myriads, that has never failed to cure  
the most obstinate case, a remedy discovered  
like this Embolism only after long profound  
study, and attempts often baffled. Indomitable  
Latta perseverance had at length found the  
remedy, the magic compound was at last  
revealed, the goddess of health smiled benignly  
on her of ancient days, hopes revive in the heart  
of afflicted sufferers, and Pothos fulminates,



(111)  
That for long ages has perished long gone  
and to long ago that has not in done  
succumb arms, and when discomfited from  
the field. Yet this benefactor of the world  
is deemed long forgotten. When did he  
lack foes? Gallileo was imprisoned for  
his discoveries, and like Gallileo he is  
willing to suffer, if but the world is benefited.  
The number of these public benefactors is  
beyond computation. Our own Country is  
a nursery for them as well as for harvest.  
This City of Bethany alone has furnished its  
full quota. Magnificent stone buildings  
grow, being surrounded with all healing  
expectations, warranted to keep in any climate,  
to be well shaken before taken. The age is  
wary with reading the panegyrics of their  
masters. Language is full to paint their  
merits. Confesses from the most respectable  
source, confound all gainsayers. Even the most

judicious and skeptical are constrained in  
the face of such facts, to cry out "May be there  
is something in this after all. Then can Smith  
and Brown and Jones, whom I have killed, and  
who had the Consumption beyond a doubt,  
that testify that this medicine has actually  
restored them to perfect health. I may as  
well try a bottle. It is only a dollar and  
can't do much harm any how, if it does  
no good." And so every mind that thus,  
thus, goes to the public benefactor, who  
with well lined pockets is a few years  
retired from business, supposing, in the moment  
his assurance and mendacity have run.  
Year after year the same tragic farce is  
acted over and over again. All the facts  
are now dead; and till the blood is stirred,  
facts will live and flourish. If our  
public schools taught even the first and  
plainest principles of physiology, then might

to some hope of abating the evil. Nor  
have even Potentents will admit that Ignorance  
is the mother of Devotion to the goddess  
Worship; though on this case lies far  
from true that Ignorance is, this would  
hence "be folly to be wise".

In the treatment of this disease, it is generally  
opined among honest cultivated physicians,  
that medicines are of little avail. And  
those who experience have the largest  
give the least medicine. Occasionally some  
sanguine practitioners of a more liberal  
a remedy, from observing the temporary effects  
of his prescriptions in a few cases that come  
under his notice. But the relief forerunning  
a temporary cure, and the conviction forced  
upon his mind is that except in its in-  
-ipient stage, the help of man is vain. That  
here lies the difficulty. So deception is the  
disease, so inveterate in its approach, that



no danger is apprehended till it is too late  
to ward it off. The heart can no longer  
when there is no power. And in a vast  
majority of cases all that is left is, to smooth  
the pathway to the tomb.

So far as the tubercular diathesis is concerned,  
I consider it a description of the general  
tune and vigor of the system and of the  
character of the blood. The object is then to  
restore vigor to the system, and health to  
the blood. No preventive and hygienic agents  
are more simple and familiar, and more  
more salutary and efficacious, than the in-  
halation of pure fresh air, and the taking of  
suitable exercise. Not exercise for four months  
a day, banded up in flannels; but continual  
regular exercise for months and years, this  
should not be so violent, as to greatly fatigue,  
but should be gradually increased as the  
strength will allow. Neither should it be

discontinued when the mercury sinks in the  
thermometer. With feet properly protected, and  
skin cleaned by daily ablutions, the patient  
will find the cold only bracing and exhilarating.  
Some physicians entertain the notion that  
when a person is threatened with diseased  
lungs, he must at once be removed to a well-  
heated apartment, and avoid the fresh  
air, as though it were poison to him. No mis-  
take could possibly be more fatal, none  
further from sound medical philosophy;  
and no course will with more certainty fasten  
upon the misguided patient the very disease  
he seeks to avert. Gymnastics, gardening,  
hunting, fishing, swimming, and riding,  
in a carriage or on horseback, all afford  
exhilarating and salutary exercise. Long  
journeys on horseback or a daily ride of ten or  
twenty miles have been found highly beneficial.  
The greatest difficulty is in inducing the patient

to preserve in this course. Hence the chances  
are greatly in his favor who is compelled by  
his business to take such exercise. Persons  
inclined to Consumption, on entering the  
military service, have entirely overcome  
the disease, and in common life, mechanics  
have a much better prospect of securing their  
men of sedentary habits.

Next to exercise in importance, is a proper  
temperature of body. The influence of cold is  
very depressing, but this is to be guarded against  
not by shutting oneself up in the chimney  
corner all winter. By doing this, he loses  
the benefit of fresh air and exercise, which are  
of first importance, while temperature is only  
of secondary. Rather let him protect himself  
against it by daily washings and proper clothing,  
guarding his feet especially and avoiding  
exposure to currents of air while in perspi-  
ration. Every person of a Consumption must



tation should be flannel under their linen;  
it stimulates the skin, catches the insensate  
perspirations, and in case of a slight exposure  
to a draft of air, or to a cold apartment,  
it guards against taking cold. If his  
residence is subject to sudden atmospheric  
changes, it may be well for him to seek a  
climate dry and of uniform temperature.  
On the other hand, too great heat, is almost as  
bad as too great cold. Hence a residence  
during the heats of summer in a mountain-  
ous region may be beneficial.

The diet is of great importance in Consump-  
tion. As the object is to impart vigor, while  
guarding against inflammation, the most nu-  
tritious unstimulating food should be taken.

Fruits and vegetables are most suitable.  
The more exercise, the more food, is a good  
rule. As far as may be the mind should be  
kept quiet, and all disturbing influences be

carefully shut out. Disappointed affection preys  
like a worm in the bud. Failed ambition eats  
like a canker. Travelling is often beneficial,  
not only on account of the exercise, but as  
drawing off the mind to agreeable objects, in-  
stead of feeding misery. It may not be out  
of place to suggest, that a well grounded, firm  
religious faith, with its cherished hopes, will  
be a stay and solace when all else fails.  
It has been already said that in this disease  
medicine is of little avail; yet in conjunction  
with the measures we have recommended, we have  
many remedies in our Materia Medica, which have  
proved highly beneficial in many cases, in their  
incipient stages - among the most prominent  
are the following, viz. phos. hepatic. sulph. Cal. Carb.  
merc. Stannum, silicis, sulph. el. picris aselli,  
acid. phos. iodine, china, puls. Santucus, and  
Gonopodium.